
June 27, 2019

The Sexual Assault Centre (Hamilton and Area) is shocked and appalled by the recent events that transpired at Hamilton Pride.

SACHA is an organization that works to challenge social and political structures and systems that contribute to the experience of violence, oppression, and exploitation of all people. We see everyday the violence that White supremacy, misogyny, LGBTQI2SA+-hatred maintain and perpetuate. We know that these structures operate as a pervasive undercurrent in our society.

In recent weeks its presence has come into razor sharp visibility. Silence is complicity and action must be taken. We appreciate and stand in solidarity with all the community groups and individuals who have been standing up against this rising hate in our city.

We are concerned that the actions of Hamilton Police failed to address the safety of members of the LGBTQI2SA+ communities. In response to the violent actions of White supremacists and Neo-Nazis events at Pride, we have seen the Police target and arrest members of queer communities. This, further creates distrust and fear for those who are already marginalized. We are also troubled to see comments by Police Chief Girt that Hamilton Police Services would have "been deployed differently during the city's Pride festival if they had been welcomed at the event" (CBC news).

As we strive to fight the forces of violence in Hamilton it is important to hold elected officials accountable when the safety of residents is threatened by Neo-Nazis and White supremacists. These are groups that the government of Canada has recently put on Canada's list of terrorist entities (Global news). Hamilton is known to have one of the highest hate crimes across the country and it is time we address this issue head on. We stand with residents of Hamilton from the LGBTQI2SA+ communities and call for:

- All community organizations to take a stand in support of residents from LGBTQI2SA+ communities facing hate and violence from Neo-Nazis and White supremacists.
- All residents of Hamilton to email their respective City Councillors to meet with the LGBTQ Advisory Committee to listen to their concerns and what the City can do to ensure their safety.
- Folks who are able to, to donate to amazing community organizations like Spectrum who are doing much needed and incredible work with/for LGBTQI2SA+ youth.

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1. We call on the Mayor and City Council to **take definitive action to end the weekly protests of Yellow Vests, Proud Boys, Canadian Nationalist Party, Sons of Odin, other White supremacist** and hate groups and their supporters outside City Hall. The presence of these groups creates an unsafe environment for Black, Indigenous, racialized, and other marginalized members of our communities, especially because they have shown themselves to be violent through their support of and participation in the attacks during Pride.
2. We call on the Mayor to **address the concerns that have been raised about the lack of accountable process for selecting community members of the Police Services Board.**
3. We call on Hamilton Police to **immediately review the arrest of Cedar Hopperton and other Pride supporters.**
4. We call on City Council to **increase funding to services that support LGBTQI2SA+ youth** and others, and facilitate the creation of safe spaces.

We hope you join us as we strive to create a world free from violence and oppression.

In solidarity,

SACHA